

**Ron Brown, Week 1
December 12, 2007**

Top Three Concerns of the principal:

1. Student Transportation: the concern of the parent will be how their child will get to school.
 - Currently Ron Brown students are receiving free bus tickets. Will this process continue? Half of the current population of students in Ron Brown are out of boundary
 - Are there enough crossing guards where necessary?
2. Teachers concerns: teachers will want to know their job status
 - Set an early date (prior to school year ending) to announce job status
 - teachers need enough time to find new jobs if need be (by stating that we will give them adequate time we might avoid a rush of teachers leaving our schools with no replacements)
 - Allow time for discussion so that teachers feel that they were able to voice their opinion.
3. Parents concern: will my child be safe?
 - Parents and teachers will be concerned regarding the combination of school communities. What about gangs, violence or building safety etc.

Top Three concerns of the Parent Empowerment Rep

1. What are the implications to a community that will be impacted more than once with destabilization due to school closings?
 - Will it be too hard on schools that have already gone through school closings to be impacted twice and possible a third time?
2. Transfer of programs
 - Will all of the programs offered in my school transfer? Will the programs in the new school stay the same?

****she mostly agreed with the concerns of the principal****

Suggestions:

The principal of Ron Brown has been through a school closing before as principal of Fletcher (Fletcher-Johnson). He had some suggestions as to what DCPS can do to improve the transition process.

1. Early dissemination of information: starting the communication process as soon as possible will eliminate confusion and misinformation.

2. Only provide correct information: Spreading incorrect information will make parents, teacher and others not trust DCPS and the information that comes from them.
3. Have all restructuring information available to the parents and teachers prior to the start of the new school year.
4. Make data-driven decisions, not emotion based. Issues arise when closings are not based on data but emotion. Example: During the last round of school closures, some schools slated for closing protested and became difficult and were able to get out of closing---sets a bad example.
5. Once we finalize the list of closing schools and keep it final. There are so many problems with changing the list once it has been "finalized". Students, teachers and parents don't know what info to rely on.
6. Have an early, widely advertised meeting between Merritt and Ron Brown. Purpose is to gather the two communities to meet each other and discuss the transition issues or other problems. (need another meeting so that parents cannot say that they were not involved in the process)
7. To positively impact the gang issue of combining schools there needs to be strong leadership in the building.
8. Be proactive in getting information out to the teachers, parents and schools. Lots of rumors going around now based on a lack of information. Spread information in multiple ways, not just emails. Send newsletters or some other way of spreading information.

Requests for additional information:

1. Detailed information on transition and closing prior to May.
2. Additional widely advertised community meeting for the combining schools to keep the parents involved.
3. Hot-line or possibly another way that parents and teachers can ask questions or get information from the central office to combat rumors, etc.
4. Restructuring information needs to be updated and spread in a way other than email and websites. Possibly principal weekly meeting to update staff or newsletters.

Positives of the restructuring from the principal's point of view

1. It is good that this process was started in December, gives time to discuss and involve the community.
2. It is positive to use Merritt as the filter school because it is close to Ron Brown in location.

3. There are at least three competing charter schools in the area and consolidating the schools will help the kids to stay in DCPS.
4. The parents have been asking for changes and additional programs for their children, the school closing will provide more opportunities
5. The most important issue is the education of children not emotional attachment to a building
6. Low enrollment is more destabilizing than moving to more programs and eventually a new building
7. In order to get a new Wilson, restructuring will have to happen and the communities want a new Wilson.

Week 1, Smothers

- Will the chancellor consider providing incentives for local graduating college students to teach art, music etc.. in our public schools?
- What will the impact be on school surroundings once a school closes?
Will the feeder school receive money for resources that normally would have gone to the school that is closing?
- Will there be long-term support given to the students transferred?